

## CHAPTER 5 - COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

### INFECTION CONTROL

Communicable diseases are a leading cause of childhood morbidity and school absences. Students and staff with communicable diseases, which can be transmitted directly or indirectly from one individual to another, require special consideration in the school setting.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has implemented “Final Bloodborne Pathogens Standard” which requires all schools receiving public funding to develop a Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan. An exposure plan and training is required for each district. It is the responsibility of the local school district to develop the plan and to assure that training is provided. School nurses qualify as providers of the training or the local school district may contract with physicians, hospitals or local health departments for their training.

Written policies for the control of Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure should include the following:

- Preventive measures necessary to protect the health of all students and staff
- Written general infection control/universal precautions procedures and procedures for the immediate care of students or staff who develop a potentially communicable illness
- Address the special needs of children with chronic infectious illness which are determined to be non-contagious under normal conditions
- Exposure Control Plan which is updated at least yearly
- Education/instruction for the general school community
- Training for school staff, students, and community that is appropriate in content and vocabulary to the educational level, literacy and language background of participants
- Provision of all materials necessary to ensure employee/student access to consistent, effective hand washing.
- Continuing education/training for staff responsible for preventing and monitoring programs
- Process for reviewing the infection control program, training, standard operation procedures, management and implementation at least annually.<sup>(1)</sup>

In schools, employees who might be covered by the OSHA standard could include but are not limited to: school nurses, those certified in first aid, custodians, teachers, secretaries, coaches and special education teachers. Any school employee who has involvement with blood or body fluids or designated duties involving blood or body fluids or designated duties involving bloodborne pathogens should be including in the training. Training videos are available to purchase about the subject of Universal Precautions and Blood-borne Disease from Learner Managed Designs, Inc.; E-mail: Video Staff Development Resources @ <http://www.lmdusa.com>, or (800) 467-1644.<sup>(2)</sup> Another video resource may be found at Coastal Technologies Corp. @ <http://www.coastalschools.com>.<sup>(3)</sup>